

SAF/LLZ (Legislative Research Team)

SMITH, Christopher H. (Republican)
Representative, 4th district, New Jersey
Elected 1980 to the 97th Congress
Reelected to succeeding Congresses



BACKGROUND

Born: Rahway, New Jersey - 4 March 1953
Home: Robbinsville, New Jersey
Marital status: Married (Marie) - 4 children
Religion: Catholic
Education: Trenton State College, BA, 1975
Military: None

Profession: Sporting Goods Executive

Political: Unsuccessful candidate for US House, 4th District, 1978. Succeeded Rep Frank Thompson Jr. (D) whom he defeated in 1980 general election after Thompson was indicted on Abscam charge. Relected in 2000 with 61% of the vote and in 2002 with 66%.

Rep Smith, a political moderate, focuses on humanitarian causes; opposes abortion.

In the 106th Congress, he was appointed to the Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe. Noting that the US Information Agency became part of the State Dept on October 1, expressed his appreciation for the work of the USIA since 1953. Sharply criticized the Russian Government for deploying forces to Chechnya. Introduced, with others, a bill to prohibit the provision of defense services and training under the Arms Export Control Act or any other Act to foreign countries that are prohibited from receiving international military education and training or any other military assistance or arms transfers. Drew attention to a section of the State Dept authorization that continues a report requiring the Sec/State to report on Vietnam's cooperation with the US on the POW/MIA accounting issue. Offered amdt that specifies that no provisions in the Treasury Appns bill regarding contraceptive coverage will apply to any existing or future plan if the carrier objects on the basis of religious beliefs. Believed that voting for H. J. Res. 44, war powers, was not the right thing to do since our fight is not with the Serbian or Yugoslavian people. Having insisted on tying the payment of UN dues to a funding ban on international organizations that promote abortion rights, triumphed under a compromise struck in Nov 99. Agreed that President Milosevic's removal is the only way to lasting peace in the Balkans and must be the basis for an exit strategy. Wanted to keep Arlington National Cemetery a cemetery for veterans. Pressured the Pentagon, which has been slow to cooperate with certain requests for information about Joint Combined Exchange Training (JCET), to promise to turn over information concerning training of troops in Rwanda and Indonesia.

In the 107th Congress, believed that in regards to Iraq "force should only be used as a last resort." Said regime change can occur over a long period of time. Questioned why the US should pay \$67 million in dues to UNESCO. Endorsed legislation that would boost the Montgomery GI Bill education benefit from \$650/month to \$1,000. Sponsored bill to increase death and retirement benefits for vets. In the 108th Congress, supported a goal of 3% for the number of federal contracts that went to businesses owned by disabled contracts, but also said it should be a goal and not a mandate.

AF Bases: McGuire AFB (also Reserve Forces)

COMMITTEES

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS – Subcs on International Terrorism, Nonproliferation and Human Rights; East Asia and the Pacific

VETERANS AFFAIRS -- Chairman